

CTA State Council took place in Los Angeles January 26 and 27. As usual, I was there on Thursday the 24th to represent you at the CTA ESP Issues Advisory Committee meeting.

It was a longer than usual meeting this time. One of our major concerns and the subject of much discussion is the implementation of the dues structure as it pertains to our group (Educational Support Professionals). As you may remember, our CTA dues are assessed on a sliding scale over a 5 year period. CTA Certificated staff pay the full amount when they first join, in spite of being at entry level in the teacher salary schedule. However, while they often make quite a bit more as they add years and credits, they still pay the same dues as everyone else. Most of our members, however, may take years of service to reach the entry level teacher salary.

We came up with a strategy to begin to address this important issue.

1. We are making contact with every State Council Member that we can. This means at meetings, meals, airports etc. We describe the issue and ask their support in a review by the CTA Budget Committee to make our dues fair and equitable.
2. We are preparing a written fact sheet to send to all members of the Budget Committee.
3. We spoke on the floor at State Council. Our Issues Advisory Chairperson, Mike Downey presented the major description of our concern on the floor on Sunday afternoon. It was my honor and privilege to speak after Mike to restate and reaffirm our concern.

During our five hour delay at the airport Sunday night, I was able to discuss this at length with a member of the Budget Committee. When she heard the dollars and cents of the issue, she immediately said, "That's not fair." Present during our discussion was a CTA lawyer and one of our NEA representatives. While the lawyer has no voice at State Council, she certainly knows many members who do. Our NEA representative does have a vote though he is not on the Budget Committee.

We all have a lot of talking and persuading to do. Though we are only ten for the whole state, we are committed to making ourselves heard on behalf of all ESP.

Our Vice President, Gina Parish, was a visitor at State Council. Ask her how she thinks it went.

My thought for this quarter is "An injury to one is an injury to all." We must use our contract, we must insist that administrators respect our contract, we must support each other, we must be united in standing up for ourselves and our fellow ESP's in insisting that administrators follow the contract. We do our part in working our allotted time and tasks with 100% effort, and they must do their part by not insisting on more. So when we work to the contract, we are protecting each other from abuse and protecting administrators from grievances. We may need to study our contract and point out, as Jeff has pointed out in the matter of evaluations, exactly what the contract says.

Kathleen Telles